

U.S. Serial No.: 09/919,204

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AUG 21 2007**REMARKS**

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. In view of the previous amendments and remarks, and the following additional remarks, reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

The claimed invention recites an information distribution device which is connected with a plurality of terminal devices belonging to a group and a content server storing distribution information via a network using an IP protocol.

One terminal device may wish to share information obtained from the content server through the internet with the other terminal devices, for instance sharing partners of a group. An URL of the content server may be provided to the other terminal devices, so that the other terminal devices can access the information by accessing to the content server using the URL. However, the other terminal devices must perform a series of operations such as specifying the URL. Consequently, when operations are troublesome, the other terminal devices are required to perform the troublesome operations to obtain the information to be shared. Further, when there is a plurality of procedures for reaching an information storage location, in a case where a plurality of options are selected, there is also the possibility that the final storage location cannot be reached (*see* page 2, lines 7 to 26 of the Specification).

Accordingly, the claimed invention provides a novel information distribution device by which the information to be shared can be correctly delivered to the other terminal devices.

In stark contrast, Sheridan discloses an imaging distribution system, in which there are distributed processing scanners, distributed customers/end users, and a central image server and storage or hub station. The hub station is apparently used to share an image set among the distributed customers/end users. In Sheridan, a customer/end user apparently informs the hub station of a granted access right set including an access right to a stored image set in association

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with an electronic address for a third party. Then the hub station transmits to the third party an electronic address for the hub station, a listing of the access rights of the granted set associated with the third party electronic address, and the access identification. Accordingly, the third party transmits to the hub station the access identification and a request to access the image set in accordance with one of the granted access rights. In this manner, the third party is allowed to access, at the hub station, the image set only in accordance with the granted access right set.

The Examiner contends that the distributed processing scanners, the distributed customers/end users, and the central image server and storage respectively correspond to the content server, the plurality of terminal devices, and the information distribution device of the claimed invention.

As further illustration of the differences between the prior art and the instant invention, please see Explanatory Sheets A and B, in which Sheet A indicates the claimed invention including an information distribution device, a content server and a plurality of terminal devices, which are connected through the internet. The information distribution device includes a first storage portion storing terminal information including an IP address of each terminal device belonging to a group. The information distribution device further includes a first receiving portion receiving, from one terminal device belonging to the group, a distribution request including a Uniform Resource Locator as access information and distribution information. The access information is required for accessing the distribution information stored in the content server. The distribution destination information specifies IP addresses of terminal devices other than the one terminal device, which belong to the group and to which are to be distributed the distribution information.

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A second receiving portion of the information distribution device accesses the distribution information stored in the content server, based on the access information included in the distribution request received by the first receiving portion from the one terminal device, and receives the distribution information accessed.

Further, the information distribution device includes a second storage portion which stores the distribution information accessed and received by the second receiving portion, and a first transmitting portion which transmits the distribution information stored in the second storage portion to the one terminal device and the specified other terminal devices.

Sheet B illustrates the invention of Sheridan, in which a hub station receives photo images, which are to be shared, from processing scanners. In Sheridan, a terminal device A informs the hub station of communication of information as to photo images to be shared with others and the addresses of the others. Then, the hub station transmits a message to each third party's electric address, including IDs of the user and of the photo images, so that each third party may connect to the hub station, along with a request to access and obtain the image set to be shared. The accessing is granted by the hub station if the access ID and request to the hub station are correct, while if the access ID and request are incorrect, access is not granted.

Further, the processing scanners of Sheridan are not connected to the hub station through the Internet, but are connected by a physical transfer links such as a telephone line or by means of a tape, as illustrated in Fig. 4 and discussed at column 8, lines 29-31.

Accordingly, Sheridan fails to suggest the problem and solution as described above. In Sheridan, the other terminal devices must perform a series of operations, such as specifying the URL to reach information of an image set to be shared, because the processing scanners are connected to the hub station by the physical transfer links, which need not to use IP addresses.

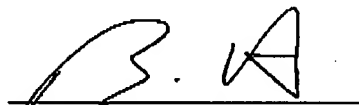
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As summarized above, Sheridan fails to indicate the features as recited in the amended claim 1, and accordingly, the claimed invention should not be rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Sheridan. Further, in Sheridan, end users must connect the central image server and storage in order to obtain an image set to be shared therefrom, and there is no correspondence with the features recited in claims 7, 8, and 13. Accordingly, claims 7, 8, and 13 should not be rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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